

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) A developer container storing powder developer therein comprising:

a mouth member having a developer outlet having an opening from which the developer is discharged; and

a shutter member for closing ~~the opening of~~ said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted into the opening to said developer outlet,

~~wherein said developer outlet a developer inlet to said mouth member is formed in the direction of gravity, and the opening of~~ said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity.

10. (Currently Amended) The developer container as claimed in claim 9, wherein ~~said developer outlet mouth member is formed with a passage communicated that is in communication with the opening developer inlet such that said passage faces the developer stored in said developer container, and an axis of~~ said passage is connected with ~~an axis of the opening of~~ said developing outlet ~~at that is formed at~~ an angle to the direction of gravity.

11. (Currently Amended) The developer container as claimed in claim 9, wherein said shutter member has a shaft-like configuration and is movable in the direction of ~~the an axis of the opening of~~ said developer outlet.

12. (Currently Amended) The developer container as claimed in claim 9, wherein said shutter member is biased by a biasing member from ~~the an~~ inside toward ~~the an~~ outside

of the developer container and movable between a closed position where the opening said developer outlet is blocked and an open position where the opening said developer outlet is unblocked.

13. (Currently Amended) A developer container comprising:
a storing member for storing powder developer therein;
a mouth member having a developer outlet having an opening from which the developer is discharged; and
a shutter member for closing ~~the opening of~~ said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted into the opening to said developer outlet,
wherein said storing member is provided with a tapered portion and said developer outlet is formed in the mouth member is provided at a tip of said tapered portion, and wherein the opening of said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity, and wherein said mouth member is formed with a passage that is in communication with a developer inlet of said mouth member such that said passage faces the developer stored in said storing member, and said passage is connected with said developing outlet that is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) The developer container as claimed in claim 13, wherein said shutter member has a shaft-like configuration and is movable in the direction of the an axis of the opening of said developer outlet.

16. (Currently Amended) The developer container as claimed in claim 13, wherein said shutter member is biased by a biasing member from the an inside toward the an outside

of the developer container and movable between a closed position where the opening said developer outlet is blocked and an open position where the opening said developer outlet is unblocked.

17. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:
an image carrier;
a developing device for developing a latent image on the image carrier;
a developer replenishing device comprising a developer container from which a developer is replenished to said developing device,
said developer container comprising:
a mouth member having a developer outlet having an opening from which the developer is discharged; and
a shutter member for closing the opening of said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted into the opening to said developer outlet,
wherein said developer outlet a developer inlet to said mouth member is formed in the direction of gravity, and the opening of said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity.

18. (Currently Amended) The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein said developer container is removably mounted on a mount portion of the image forming apparatus and said developer outlet mouth member of said developer container is formed at the lower portion of the developer container and the opening formed on said developer outlet is disposed at a side portion of said developer outlet container when said developer container is mounted on the mount portion of the image forming apparatus.

19. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein said developer replenishing device is provided with a nozzle which is inserted into or removed from said developer outlet, and said shutter member is moved when said nozzle is inserted into said developer outlet.

20. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 19, wherein a diameter of said shutter member is the same as that of said nozzle.

21. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 17, further comprising a seal member for closing said developer outlet, wherein an inside diameter of said seal member is less than an outside diameter of said shutter member.

22. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:
an image carrier;
a developing device ~~far for~~ developing a latent image on the image carrier;
a developer replenishing device comprising a developer container from which a developer is replenished to said developing device,
said developer container comprising:
a storing member for storing powder developer therein;
a mouth member having a developer outlet ~~having an opening~~ from which the developer is discharged; and

a shutter member for closing ~~the opening~~ of said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted into the opening to said developer outlet,
wherein said storing member is provided with a tapered portion and said developer outlet is formed in the mouth member is provided at a tip of said tapered portion, and the

opening of said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity, and
wherein said developer container is removably mounted on a mount portion of the
image forming apparatus and said mouth member of said developer container is formed at the
lower portion of the developer container and said developer outlet is disposed at a side
portion of said developer container when said developer container is mounted on the mount
portion of the image forming apparatus.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said developer replenishing device is provided with a nozzle which is inserted into or removed from said developer outlet, and said shutter member is moved when said nozzle is inserted into said developer outlet.

25. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 24, wherein a diameter of said shutter member is the same as that of said nozzle.

26. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 22, further comprising a seal member for closing said developer outlet, and an inside diameter of said seal member is less than an outside diameter of said shutter member.

27. (New) A developer container storing powder developer therein comprising: a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged; and

a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted to said developer outlet, said shutter member being provided on an outside of said mouth member,

wherein said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity.

28. (New) An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image carrier;

a developing device for developing a latent image on the image carrier;

a developer replenishing device comprising a developer container from which a developer is replenished to said developing device,

said developer container comprising:

a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged;

and

a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted to said developer outlet, said shutter member being provided on an outside of said mouth member,

wherein said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity.

29. (New) A developer container storing powder developer therein comprising:

a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged;

and

a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted to said developer outlet,

wherein a developer inlet to said mouth member is formed in a direction that is substantially perpendicular to a direction of said developer outlet.

30. (New) An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image carrier;

a developing device for developing a latent image on the image carrier;

a developer replenishing device comprising a developer container from which a developer is replenished to said developing device,

said developer container comprising:

a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged;

and

a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted to said developer outlet,

wherein a developer inlet to said mouth member is formed in a direction that is substantially perpendicular to a direction of said developer outlet.

31. (New) A developer container comprising:

a storing member for storing powder developer therein;

a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged;

and

a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted to said developer outlet,

wherein said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity, and

wherein said shutter member is not provided within said storing member.

32. (New) An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image carrier;

a developing device for developing a latent image on the image carrier;

a developer replenishing device comprising a developer container from which a

Application Serial No.: 10/829,227
Reply to Office Action dated September 24, 2004

developer is replenished to said developing device,
said developer container comprising:
a storing member for storing powder developer therein;
a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged;
and
a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted
to said developer outlet,
wherein said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity, and
wherein said shutter member is not provided within said storing member.